welcomed the presentation of the budget proposals in a new results-based format which was aimed at effecting a change from a system of input accounting to one of results-based accountability. However, in many cases, the objectives and expected accomplishments were ambiguously defined. While many of the indicators were appropriate and useful, others needed to be further defined in order to become more specific, measurable and time-bound. In order to evaluate the continued relevance and cost-effectiveness of programmes and screen out those which were obsolete or redundant, a comprehensive review should be conducted by the programme managers, especially with regard to programmes that were being rolled over from one budget period to the next. In that context, his delegation supported the early introduction of sunset provisions as a built-in review mechanism.

119. Noting that the proposed budget represented an increase of 4.6 per cent in nominal terms over that of the previous biennium, he stressed the importance of strict budgetary discipline. He also noted that requirements relating to the issue of staff security and the outcome of the comprehensive review of peacekeeping operations had not been reflected in the budget proposals. His delegation strongly believed that further cost efficiencies could be achieved in many sections of the budget and that the overall level of the proposed budget could be significantly reduced. Zero nominal growth could be attainable for the forthcoming biennium if resources were redeployed from low to higher priority areas and if new requirements for resources were carefully scrutinized and weighed against continuing commitments for existing programmes.

120. The budget proposals for the biennium 2002-2003 indicated a net decrease of 94 posts. His delegation was concerned that the proposed number of reclassifications and new posts, especially at the D-1 level and above, might reinforce the already top-heavy post structure of the Secretariat and would be incompatible with the need to revitalize and rejuvenate the Organization. His delegation would like to see further justification for the upward reclassifications in terms of increased responsibilities and changes in the nature and scope of the work.

121. His delegation supported the continued investment in information technology as a means of increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of substantive programmes and the overall management of the Organization. The strategy for extensive use of information technology should be designed to bring about gains in productivity and efficiency which would eventually allow for a reduction in staff and savings in support services.

122. In conclusion, he reiterated his delegation's support for the established budgetary process set out in resolution 41/213 and the annex thereto. It hoped that the spirit of consensus embodied in that resolution would prevail during consideration of the proposed programme budget at the current session.

123. **Mr. Musambachime** (Zambia) said that his delegation associated itself with the statement made by the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the Group of 77 and China but wished to raise a number of further issues.

124. The proposed programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003 had to be considered in the context of the serious financial situation facing the United Nations as a result of the non-payment by some Member States of their assessed contributions, which had resulted in continuous borrowing from the peacekeeping operations budget. As a result of that trend, the United Nations owed large amounts of money by way of reimbursements to troop-contributing countries. If those countries, particularly developing countries such as his own, were not reimbursed, they would not be able to sustain their troops who were currently deployed on various missions. His delegation therefore called on Member States to pay their assessed contributions to the regular budget in full, on time and without conditions. At the same time, his delegation recognized that some Member States, in particular some of the developing countries, were experiencing economic difficulties. The General Assembly should continue to give sympathetic consideration to those States.

125. His delegation had observed with concern the increasing use of extrabudgetary resources for mandated programmes and activities which should be funded under the regular budget in accordance with Article 17 of the Charter. Where extrabudgetary resources had to be accepted, there should be no conditions attached other than the delivery of mandated programmes and activities.

126. The other area of concern to his delegation was the continuing occurrence of high vacancy rates. While it agreed with the Secretary-General's proposal that

overall vacancy rates should not exceed 5 per cent of Professional posts and 2 per cent of General Service posts, it was concerned that that principle was not universally applied. It was particularly disturbing to note that high vacancy rates were more common in the regional commissions, which were based in developing countries.

127. Turning to the subject of geographical distribution, he said that his delegation was deeply concerned about the imbalance in the composition of the staff of the Secretariat. His own country had a desirable range of 1-14 but only 3 of its nationals were in the Professional category, and none at the senior management level. His country had many experienced and qualified candidates who had applied for posts in the United Nations but had not been appointed. In that connection, he drew particular attention to Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter which referred to the importance of recruiting the staff on as wide a geographical basis as possible.

128. Given the limited resources of the Organization to implement the mandates approved by the General Assembly, his delegation felt that consultants should only be used when in-house expertise was not available. Where consultants and contractors were needed, they should, as far as possible, reflect the international character of the Organization and be hired on a wide geographical basis.

129. His delegation attached particular importance to certain sections of the proposed budget for the biennium 2002-2003, including, in particular, the sections dealing with economic and social development aimed at reducing poverty, particularly in developing countries. Those sections should be adequately funded in view of the adoption of the New African Initiative by the Organization of African Unity. His delegation would like to see increased funding for section 10 of the proposed budget which covered the New Agenda for the Development of Africa.

130. The New African Initiative was the result of the realization that 340 million people in Africa were extremely poor, half of the population living on less than $1 per day. High child mortality rates, low life expectancy at birth, widespread lack of access to safe water, and high illiteracy rates were prevalent on much of the African continent.

131. Although the revival and development of Africa were primarily the responsibility of African Governments and peoples, the continent needed the assistance of the international community, including the United Nations. For that reason his delegation requested increased resources for programmes and activities for African development. With the help of Africa's development partners, the aim of eradicating poverty in Africa and improving the living standards of the people would be attained.

The meeting rose at 6.15 p.m.